

Word Meaning Sorts

Intervention Summary:

Word Meaning Sorts (WMS) is an intervention developed to increase phonological awareness and repertoire of known words. This instrument introduces novel vocabulary and requires students to sort word cards or pictures (representing words) into categories based on given similarities. In addition, students are asked to say words aloud, discuss their meaning, and use each in a sentence. WMS is suitable for virtually any student needing additional support increasing vocabulary and phonological awareness, and is appropriate for those who are able to read, as well as those who are unable to read. WMS may be beneficial for individuals or groups at the tier I, II, or III level. A teacher, paraprofessional, or other adult may facilitate the intervention.

Materials Needed:

- Index cards with printed words or picture cards
- Word or picture cards representing each category
- Word Use Fluency subtest of DIBELS or an alternative progress-monitoring tool

Procedures:

Obtaining Baseline Data

Collect baseline by using DIBELS Word Use Fluency benchmarking probes, or a curriculum-based measurement. At least three data points should be collected prior to intervention implementation. After the baseline data have been collected, plot the data along with the goal line on the chart and give to the teacher so he/she can plot the weekly progress monitoring data.

Intervention Steps

1. Tell the students what topic they will be learning about during the session. For this example, the student will be sorting words based on rhyming sounds, so you would tell the students “today we are paying attention to how some words rhyme. Some words end in an ‘at’ sound.”
2. Provide an example of two picture or word cards that belong to the same category. For this example, you may hold up cards representing “cat” and “fat,” and say “these two words go together because they both end in an ‘at’ sound. Because ‘cat’ and ‘fat’ both end in an ‘at’ sound, I will put them in the ‘at’ sound pile.” Repeat the process using words from the other available rhyming group. For example, you may have a pile for

words that rhyme with “at”, and a pile for words that rhyme with “ap.” You may continue to model a few additional times for the students, as needed.

3. A picture or word card should represent each category. When modeling, say the word on the card or name of the picture aloud, and emphasize the category to which the item belongs, while placing it in the appropriate pile. Piles should be located underneath the card indicating the category type.
4. Provide the student a stack of picture or word cards. At this time, the student should name aloud each of the picture or word cards, placing them in the appropriate pile. If the student is unable to name the card, tell the student the word represented on the card. If the student is unable to place the card in the correct category, instruct the student in the word’s meaning.
5. Provide feedback, praise, and encouragement, as appropriate, after the student attempts each card.
6. When all of the cards have been sorted, allow students to look through their piles, self-correcting errors with your help.
7. Ask the student to use each of the words in a sentence.

*As the student progresses, additional categories may be added.

*The primary source for WMS suggests providing the intervention four days a week, for 10 to 15 minutes a day.

Progress Monitoring:

Progress should be monitored on a weekly basis using Word Use Fluency progress monitoring probes via DIBELS, or through a curriculum based vocabulary probe. Review the progress monitoring data each week. If the progress monitoring data points are below the goal line three times in a row, the intervention plan needs to be reviewed to determine if changes in the intervention or goal need to be made.

In addition, an intervention checklist, such as the one below, should be filled out on a daily basis to track implementation integrity.